

Findings from the Field

Volume 6

Article 2

2023

Fuller Forest Preserve Vernal Pool

Sofie R

York Middle School

Follow this and additional works at: <https://findings.gmri.org/journal>

Recommended Citation

R, Sofie (2023) "Fuller Forest Preserve Vernal Pool," *Findings from the Field*: Vol. 6, Article 2.

Available at: <https://findings.gmri.org/journal/vol6/iss1/2>

This Nature Notes is brought to you for free and open access by Findings from the Field. It has been accepted for inclusion in Findings from the Field by an authorized editor of Findings from the Field.

Fuller Forest Preserve Vernal Pool

by Sofie R

A vernal pool is a habitat for many creatures that may live within the small body of standing water. Since the defining trait of a vernal pool is that it occurs seasonally, the organisms inside have to adapt. The Jefferson Salamander, which is native to the East Coast lays its eggs in early spring so they can mature before the vernal pool dries up for the season. The egg masses are usually laid by the females near branches or bushes/grass in the vernal pools. The eggs are usually smaller in size and amount than other amphibian egg masses, like the spotted salamander. Those two facts could have supported why it was harder to find the egg masses.

I went out to conduct fieldwork on April 25 from 9:00 AM-10:30 AM at Fuller Forest Preserve in York, ME. Our surroundings were open around the vernal pool with trees encircling it. The water was murky with leaves and branches floating around the edges of the pool.

After an hour of searching through the vernal pool, we found nothing except a few unidentified insects. I didn't find any egg masses in person and was surprised by that. I was not expecting the lack of egg masses in the pool because from my research prior to the field day, I had learned that the egg masses were very common. Students assumed they were larger and easier to see since this is the only time of year they can survive. Because of my lack of finding Jefferson Salamander egg masses, I wonder if I had gone to a different pool and found one or multiple amphibian egg masses, which types would they be. I have especially researched Jefferson and Spotted Salamanders, so I would be curious to know their relationship. Including are there more Spotted Salamander egg masses or Jefferson Salamander egg masses? For example, is one better adapted or survives better? Do their different traits make one have a better chance of survival, and do differences in size of eggs, and places they are placed in affect that? I could investigate this issue further by collecting data on how many egg masses of each kind I could find at the start of the vernal pool season and then at the end to see which one survived better.



Fig. 1.

Grimes, E. (2022, September 1). Jefferson Salamander [Photograph]. Wikimedia.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ambystoma_jeffersonianum_184652332.jpg

References

Kenney, L. P., & Burne, M. R. (2001). A field guide to the animals of vernal pools. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.